In the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in this application.

1-11 (canceled).

12 (withdrawn). An ink formulation comprising a marking component and a metal salt, wherein the marking component in the absence of the metal salt undergoes a colour change in response to laser irradiation at a wavelength above 2000 nm but not between 700-2000 nm, and the metal salt absorbs laser radiation at 700-2000 nm thereby causing the marking component to change colour.

13 (withdrawn). The formulation according to claim 12, wherein the metal is a transition metal.

14 (withdrawn). The formulation according to claim 13, wherein the metal is copper.

15 (withdrawn). The formulation according to claim 12, wherein the salt is a poly-metal salt.

16 (withdrawn). The formulation according to claim 12, wherein the salt is copper hydroxyl phosphate.

17 (withdrawn-currently amended). [[A]]The formulation according to claim 12, which additionally comprises a compound including an oxymetal anion.

18 (withdrawn). The formulation according to claim 12, which additionally comprises a colour-forming compound.

19 (withdrawn). The formulation according to claim 12, which additionally comprises a binder.

20 (withdrawn). The formulation according to claim 12, which is water-based.

21 (withdrawn). The formulation according to claim 12, which comprises an organic solvent.

22 (currently amended). A method for forming an image on a substrate, which comprises applying onto the substrate an ink formulation comprising a marking component and a metal salt, wherein the marking component in the absence of the metal salt undergoes a colour change in response to laser irradiation at a wavelength above 2000 nm but not between 700-2000 nm, and the metal salt absorbs laser radiation at 700-2000 nm thereby causing the marking component to change colour; wherein said method further comprises irradiating the formulation with a laser.

23 (previously presented). The method according to claim 22, wherein the laser is a diode or CO_2 laser.

24 (new). The method according to claim 22, wherein the marking component is a compound including an oxymetal anion.

25 (new). The method according to claim 24, wherein the marking component is ammonium octamolybdate.

26 (new). The method according to claim 22, wherein the salt is a copper salt.

27 (new). The method according to claim 26, wherein the marking component is a compound including an oxymetal anion.

28 (new). The method according to claim 27, wherein the marking component is ammonium octamolybdate.

29 (new). The method according to claim 22, wherein the salt is a poly-metal salt.

30 (new). The method according to claim 22, wherein the salt is copper (II) hydroxyl phosphate.

31 (new). The method according to claim 22, wherein the formulation further comprises a binder.

32 (new). The method according to claim 22, wherein the formulation is water-based.

33 (new). The method according to claim 22, wherein the formulation further comprises an organic solvent.